

Summit-in-a-Box



Created by Eucalyp
from Noun Project

Facilitator Guide

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1. INTRODUCTION TO N-CATT & SUMMIT-IN-A-BOX

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR APPLIED TRANSIT TECHNOLOGY (N-CATT) IS A FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION FUNDED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER FOCUSED ON PROVIDING SMALL-URBAN, RURAL AND TRIBAL TRANSIT AGENCIES WITH PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR REPLICABLE TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS AND INNOVATIONS.

N-CATT created the Summit-in-a-Box to provide facilitators (often state DOTs, but facilitators could be MPOs, regional planning agencies, or transit agencies) with a resource to identify statewide or regional transit technology issues and develop a framework for addressing those challenges. The materials are intended to:

- Provide a set of resources so that facilitators can identify statewide or regional transit technology issues
- Engaging materials to foster conversation across transit agencies to share technology shortfalls and identify opportunities for improvement

This is made with state DOTs and their localities in mind, but N-CATT encourages state/regional associations, groups of agencies, or even individual agencies to use this framework as well.

1.1. How to use Summit-in-a-Box

This Summit-in-a-Box is intended to be customized to each state or regions specific needs. Is there a section that isn't relevant? Skip it! Do you want to dive deeper into a certain topic? Great! These materials can be adapted to in-person or virtual meetings - as long as you have a platform for agencies to communicate. We recommend having the following:

- At least one facilitator, multiple if you're hosting break-out sessions
- A note-taker
- Your audience!

Keep in mind that N-CATT staff is available to assist your organization with your summit planning and implementation process. Please feel free to reach out to our team at carpenter@ctaa.org or moreno@ctaa.org.

1.1.1. What's in the Summit-in-a-Box?

1. Facilitator Guide
2. Materials List
3. Topic booklets
4. [Visioning Survey](#)
5. Visioning Card Deck

1.2. Set your Vision

Before you begin developing your Summit plan, let's dig into some important questions to reflect on.



1.3. Pre-Work

Now that you know what you want to accomplish with your Summit, the next step is to organize and engage your localities even before the meeting.

Use the following checklist when you are crafting your Summit invite.

Figure 1: Summit Invite Checklist

IDENTIFY AND CONTACT YOUR AUDIENCE

- Determine your invitees
- Invite your audience
- Plan to follow up (3 days after? One week after?)

FIND YOUR AUDIENCE'S BASELINE

- Survey them on their current levels of comfort, what they currently use related to the Summit focus question, what they would like to use, and what challenges they have
- Consider implementing a tech readiness or data maturity assessment
- Keep the survey short and sweet

TELL YOUR AUDIENCE WHAT YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH

- What will they contribute by participating in this Summit?
- What will you do with the information they contribute?
- At the end of the Summit, what can they expect to see?
- What will happen with the outcomes of this Summit? What is the follow-up?

2. DURING THE SUMMIT

This Summit is meant to help the facilitator communicate its technology goals to localities, and to identify what localities, and to identify what localities need in that context. As a result, the Summit should center on discussion among attendees and the facilitators instead of presentations. Presentations make sense in the following cases:

- Re-capping results from a pre-Summit survey
- Explaining the Summit's technology topic, such as where the localities are (survey results!) and where the facilitator hopes to be
- Case studies or examples to prompt discussion

With that in mind, here is a framework for holding the Summit:

- Welcome and facilitator introduction
- Ice breaker/warm-up – these are important! These exercises build rapport, loosen people up, and get them to trust each other. By engaging in these activities before addressing the Summit topic, people are in a mental space where they are readier and more willing to share ideas that might feel risky.
- Set the expectations and roles for the facilitator and participants
- Set the stage with the focus question and desired outcomes
- Facilitated discussion
 - Utilize the topic books and visioning cards!
 - Consider breaking into groups to discuss among themselves and review high-level takeaways with the main group
 - After – Break: give people a chance to review data and bring up anything else that should inform your groups thinking. Make sure to take notes!
- Review data collected and clarify questions that the data raised
 - Discuss main takeaways as to state of the **topic** across attending agencies
- **Informational brief on the topic – tailor it to the group based on survey results**
 - Examples in topic book
 - What do participants do during this time?
 - Brief discussion to de-brief
 - Have up to one more informational brief on the topic, with the same setup and a break in between
- Breakout groups
 - What are the issues?
 - Design criteria: based on our on-the-ground knowledge this is what we as agencies need regarding this topic, mind mapping
- Main group: prioritize design criteria
 - Make or break vs. nice to have
- Breakout groups
 - How might we accomplish this as the group we've created, what do we need to happen at the state or local level or fulfill the design criteria?
- Main group
 - What have we learned? Reach consensus on a path forward. Set priorities. Agencies, regions and state take ownership of actionable tasks.
- Re-state next steps, and who has ownership over each one.
- Hold and summarize meeting outcomes
- Let participants know that they should expect a survey for feedback on the Summit

This is a suggestion, and we highly encourage you to customize the Summit to your needs. Just remember, the goal is to facilitate discussion and identify solutions tailored to your state or region.

3. AFTER THE SUMMIT

When you are sending out the evaluation survey, make sure to keep it short and sweet. You will use this tool to gauge the Summit's effectiveness for attendees. We recommend using a Likert Scale while leaving room for comments.

Figure 2: End of Summit Survey Example

Keep it short and simple. You may want to use a Likert Scale and include an area for open-ended responses. There are many options of survey software available such as SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics, Google Forms and Typeform.

Example Survey Questions

- (1) I learned something useful about localities' technology needs during the Summit (e.g. concepts, information) that has informed my work.
- (2) I learned something useful about the DOT's technology needs during the Summit (e.g. concepts, information) that has informed my work
- (3) The Summit led to meaningful progress in our state's technology priorities.
- (4) The process contributed to achieving/identifying planning/implementation goals.

You can modify these questions as needed, but it is important to get feedback on how to improve!

Make sure to follow up as you said you would, based on what the group identified. Evaluate progress on identified next steps at regular intervals: 1 month, 3 months, 6 months. You can use the following table to sketch out your goals for each interval and take notes on any new developments since the Summit.

Figure 3: Post-Summit Follow Up

Time Interval	Anticipated Progress	Notes
1 Month		
3 Months		
6 Months		
1 Year		

Just like that, you should be prepared for your Summit! Make sure to use the other components of Summit-in-a-Box to engage your audience throughout the process – pre-work, the Summit itself, and the follow-up. Staff at N-CATT are more than happy to provide any additional guidance or clarification on these materials, so don't hesitate to reach out!

Andrew Carpenter
Director, National Center for Applied Transit Technology
carpenter@ctaa.org

Marcela Moreno
Transit Technologist, National Center for Applied Transit Technology
moreno@ctaa.org